

EARLY DAYS ON THE WEST SHORE OF CEDAR LAKE

The Story of Cedar Lake goes back to the days of the trappers and loggers. The land around the lake made a very different picture from the one we know today. Surrounding the lake was a large open hay meadow, where fishermen had tramped a trail as they walked around the edge of the lake while fishing for northerns. According to all stories, it didn't take ~~the fish~~ long to catch all the fish one wanted to take home.

On the high ground around the lake in the early days was a very thick stand of white pine trees, the object of many logging companies. In the early 1900's the remains of a large camp could be seen north of the Walter Purdy place on the bank of Cedar Creek. There is the story that a logging company from Stillwater spent a whole winter cutting the fine large trees and preparing them for logs to be taken to the sawmills at Stillwater. Because spring came much earlier than expected, the entire lot was left in the woods to decay.

When the farmers came they found only a few deserted trappers' shacks and houses left by the logger, plus a great many stumps to clear before they could have any fields. The hay meadows were literally full of tamarack, some fallen and others standing. Many hot days were spent in the swamps with axe and scythe and fork before enough hay could be put up for the cattle.

Because of their steadiness oxen were used to pull poles into a ridge which was covered with dirt to make a road to take the place of the trail which wound northeasterly along high ground from where Walter Anderson's house now stands, crossing the swamp on a beaver dam which still shows in our pasture, and coming out about where our buildings now stand.

Henry Stephan came to his place in 1915 with his axe and stove pipe on his back, determined to make a home on his new farm. He found a small trappers shack and two little garden patches cleared to start with. After he dug a cave in the side hill for a barn he bought an old buggy horse and one cow and thus began farming.

Davidsons bought their wood farm in the fall of 1915. Davidson came in early fall with a load of lumber to build their house and told how he was forced to tie his team at the road to cut brush and carry

fallen trees to one side to make a trail to drive into his place. His house still stands. With the help of Ernest Bloom and two other boys, they built their granary. This is a small red building that still stands. This served as shelter while they built the first part of their home. In early April the family moved from near Grantsburg, Wisconsin, a few weeks before Pearl was born. Here they all found plenty of work to do. Before they had a shed barn built, they kept their cows with the neighbors who lived on the present Janssen place.

Next came the job of building fences, clearing pastures, and breaking land. When planting time came that first year a plot from the house eastward to the road was ready for potatoes which was a very profitable crop at this time. Each year a bit more was added to the fields.

Besides clearing their land during the winters the early farmers of this community spent a great deal of time cutting logs to make lumber for farm buildings, and to sell for added income.

For these pioneers to accomplish so much ~~and~~ meant many long days of hard work by entire families without the help of the modern machinery that we have grown to believe a must.

Mrs. Edgar Davidson.